

Aboriginal Health Research News

IAB Renewal: saying goodbye to old friends and welcoming new ones

Each September marks a time of transition for the CIHR Institute Advisory Boards. It is a time when members who have been active on the board for a number of years step down and new members join the board. This year, Drs. Margo Greenwood, Fred Wien, and Jenny Joe take their leave, and Drs. Heather Castleden and Josée Lavoie take up the mantle in advising the Institute and Scientific Director Dr. Malcolm King.

Having spent 7 years on the IAB, including the last 3 years as IAB chair, Margo Greenwood made substantial contributions to the board by bringing her perspective on Aboriginal children's health and education.

When asked to reflect on his 6 years – 2 years as Chair – on the IAB, Fred Wien responded: "I looked forward to the IAB meetings. They provided a tremendous opportunity for the exchange of information and perspectives with

other IAB members and invited guests. The net effect of the meetings was to provide solid advice to the Institute on its initiatives and priorities. I think I always got more out of the meetings than I contributed."

Jenny Joe, a member of the Navajo nation in the US, offered these parting words: "Native peoples of North America share a lot in common, especially in the areas of health disparities. Native communities on both sides of the border are not passive in the face of challenges. They are determined to overcome these disparities by tapping into many resources, leveraging their cultural strengths and exercising the wisdom to know how best to address these health issues through research and innovative interventions."

Heather Castleden, one of two new members joining the board, is currently Associate Professor in the School of Resource and Environmental Studies at Dalhousie University. She holds cross appointments in the Department

of Bioethics and the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology (Faculty of Medicine) as well as the College of Sustainability at Dalhousie University.

Dr. Josée Lavoie is currently Associate Professor with the School of Health Sciences at the University of Northern British Columbia, and as of January 1st, 2014, will be taking on the role of Director of the Manitoba First Nations Centre for Aboriginal Health Research at the University of Manitoba.

Before beginning her research career, Josée spent 10 years working in Indigenous-controlled health services in Nunavik, Nunavut and Northern Saskatchewan.

We bid a fond farewell to our departing members and a warm welcome to our new members.



Dr. Heather Castleden



Dr. Josée Lavoie

Funding Opportunity Reminder

Applied Public Health Chairs (related to Pathways)

Letter of Intent deadline: 2013-10-30

Network Catalyst Grant – Skeletal Muscle, Skin, Aboriginal Knowledge and Ways of Knowing, and Adding Life to the Late Years

Application deadline: 2013-11-01

Planning Grants: Fall 2013 Priority Announcements

Application deadline: 2013-10-15

Dissemination Events: Fall 2013 Priority Announcements

Application deadline: 2013-10-15

Phase I – Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse

The CIHR-Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction recently announced the launch of phase I of the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM).

Intervention for substance misuse is a pressing and complex health issue that requires evidence-based approaches, an understanding of the biological, psychosocial and social factors and an acknowledgement of the important impact of cultural and societal contexts in order to be truly effective. Many intervention modalities exist and are known to have excellent results, yet they have not been widely implemented. CIHR-INMHA is thus developing CRISM, a national research consortium in substance misuse. **Application deadline: October 15, 2013**



Pathways Update

Partners for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange (PEKE) Enhancement Workshop

As part of the process for selecting three Partners for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange (PEKE), a call for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) was launched in June to invite Aboriginal organizations to submit EOIs to explain how they would organize a PEKE. PEKEs will play a central role in linking and facilitating interactions among the Pathway funded researchers, Aboriginal communities, policy makers and partners. The intent of this workshop was to aid applicants in the development of their PEKE full proposals and, where necessary, to bring organizations together to form a PEKE.

It was a great pleasure for IAPH to co-host with the CIHR Institute of Gender and Health (IGH) and the Institute of Population and Public Health (IPPH), the Partners for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange (PEKE) Workshop

on September 13th, in Ottawa, at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health. A total of 23 participants, representing eleven different PEKE applications came together: to learn more about Pathways; to learn from each other; to explore opportunities to collaborate; and to refine their proposals and make them as strong as possible. Elder Paul Skanks, from the Kahnawake Mohawk Territory, shared some of his strength with us by welcoming us at Wabano Centre and the traditional lands of the Algonquin. His opening prayer and wise words anchored the discussion and inspired us throughout the day.

This was a unique gathering for Aboriginal Organizations. First Nations, Inuit and Metis organizations from across Canada came together with a shared purpose of working towards health equity for all Aboriginal peoples. Dr. King noted

that the PEKE funding opportunity is the first time CIHR is specifically supporting Aboriginal organizations to be active partners in research, a definite sign of a changing landscape in how research will be moving forward under the Pathways initiative. Signature Initiatives, such as Pathways, are ultimately intended to change how CIHR supports research and translate knowledge into improved health outcomes.

Overall, the PEKE workshop is an important milestone for Pathways Initiative. In the New Year, once the results of the review process are known to us, we are looking forward to informing the broader community about the results of the PEKE competition. Until then, for more information about the Pathways and the PEKEs, please visit the Pathway website.

Australian perspectives in Indigenous Mentorship



While in Vancouver to present at the 2013 National Gathering of Graduate Students in June, Adrian Miller, of the Jirbal people of North Queensland (Australia) and Professor of Indigenous Research at Griffith University in Queensland, spoke with IAPH about Indigenous

mentoring, research, and partnerships.

Professor Miller has a long history with mentorship, having been involved in a government mentoring program for at-risk children at an early stage. Adrian was also involved in a "...research capacity-building grant where there was a cohort of Aboriginal scholars getting mentored by lead investigators on the grant", in which he found the relationship was awkward due it being pre-determined. The Aboriginal scholars remedied the awkwardness by establishing and implementing principles

by which they could function in these mentor relationships, creating an "...Indigenous third space concept" that established an atmosphere of trust, aided by cultural and spiritual inputs, which was essential for these scholars to move forward. This third space also helped inform non-Indigenous researchers about the intricacies of conducting research with, or on, Indigenous groups. Adrian cites the group dynamic, particularly in an Indigenous context, as being integral to a successful mentoring arrangement, and the benefit of having both Indigenous and non-Indigenous senior mentors. For Adrian, some of the most valuable lessons included learning how to find research funding and how to publish, essentially "giving up the white man's secrets" and detailing "...the rules of the research game."

Professor Miller has been working with Dr. Malcolm King on developing a Griffith - Simon Fraser collaboration that would incorporate international Indigenous projects and cultural

exchanges. These exchanges would include mentoring opportunities and evaluating best practices and lessons learned between international parties – for instance comparing methods of delivering primary health care in Australia to those in Canada, and vice versa. Part of the international mentorship process needs to involve non-Indigenous researchers being mentored by Indigenous researchers. As Adrian says, "I don't think we can neglect the fact that there's always going to be non-Indigenous researchers doing Indigenous topics. Let's make them better is my philosophy."

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The Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health fosters the advancement of a national health research agenda to improve and promote the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada, through research, knowledge translation and capacity building. The Institute's pursuit of research excellence is enhanced by respect for community research priorities and Indigenous knowledge, values and cultures.

[CIHR-IAPH Website](#)